

Fact Sheet

7/06/99

NATIONAL AIR TOXICS PROGRAM: INTEGRATED URBAN STRATEGY

TODAY'S ACTION

As part of its overall efforts to reduce air toxics, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing the Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy. The Strategy presents a framework for addressing air toxics in urban areas. Air toxics, which are also known as hazardous air pollutants, are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health or environmental effects.

Under the national air toxics program, EPA has and will continue to develop a number of national standards for stationary and mobile sources to improve air quality in urban and rural areas. The Strategy complements the existing national efforts by focusing on achieving further reductions in air toxics emissions in urban areas.

The Strategy builds on the substantial emission reductions already achieved from cars, trucks, fuels, and industries such as chemical plants and oil refineries. The Strategy outlines actions to reduce emissions of air toxics and to improve EPA's understanding of the health risks posed by air toxics in urban areas.

As part of the Strategy, EPA identifies a list of the 33 air toxics that present the greatest threat to public health in the largest number of urban areas (see attached table for list of urban air toxics). Of these 33 urban air toxics, EPA has identified the 30 with the greatest contribution from smaller commercial and industrial operations or so-called "area" sources.

In the Strategy, EPA also identifies 29 area source categories that contribute to the emissions of these 30 listed air toxics. Currently, EPA has regulations under development or completed for 16 of these area source categories and intends to develop regulations for the remaining 13 area source categories over the next five years (see attached tables for list of 29 area source categories). EPA will list additional area sources by 2003 as better inventory data become available.

The Strategy also addresses the Agency's efforts to date to assess the public health risk from air toxics from mobile sources and highlights EPA's expectation for additional regulations targeting toxic emissions from motor vehicles and fuels. In the Strategy, EPA describes plans to consider diesel emissions in the upcoming mobile source air toxics regulation and a new proposed rule to lower sulfur in diesel fuel (which will reduce levels of diesel emissions significantly in both urban and rural areas).

EPA will work collaboratively with State and local governments, environmental justice communities, and affected industries, including small businesses to assure actions to implement the Strategy are responsive to health concerns while promoting fairness, encouraging urban redevelopment, and minimizing the regulatory burden.

In a related action, EPA expects to finalize a report to Congress on the status of the Strategy later this year. This is the first of two reports required under the Clean Air Act.

BACKGROUND

Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate sources of 188

listed toxic air pollutants. On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution controls, known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT).

Since 1990, EPA has issued standards that will reduce air toxics emissions from "stationary" sources by over one million tons per year -- almost 10 times greater reductions than were achieved in the previous 20 years. These standards affect over 70 categories of major industries, such as chemical plants, oil refineries, aerospace manufacturers, and steel mills and some smaller operations such as dry cleaners and commercial sterilizers.

EPA also has substantially reduced emissions of air toxics, such as lead and benzene, and other pollutants through national standards for fuels, cars and trucks. For example, EPA has issued tighter standards for tailpipe emissions from cars and trucks, for refueling vehicles, and for substantially cleaner gasoline.

Air toxics can pose special threats in urban areas because of the large number of people and the cumulative effect of many, varied sources of emissions. Consequently, EPA is supplementing the existing air toxics regulatory program with this Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy.

In the Strategy, EPA presents a framework for addressing air toxics in urban areas, looking collectively at large and small industrial and commercial operations as well as mobile sources.

WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGY?

The four key components of the Strategy will include: 1) regulations addressing sources of air toxics at both the national and local level; 2) initiatives at both the national and local level to address specific pollutants (e.g., mercury) and to identify and address specific community risks (e.g., through pilot projects); 3) air toxics assessments (including expanded air toxics monitoring and modeling) to identify areas of concern, to prioritize efforts to reduce risks, and to track progress; and 4) education and outreach efforts to inform stakeholders about the Strategy and to get input into designing programs to implement it.

As the Agency continues to improve on knowledge about risks from air toxics in urban areas, EPA will modify the Strategy to reflect any updated information.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE STRATEGY?

There are three goals for the Strategy: 1) reduce by 75 percent the risk of cancer associated with air toxics from both large and small industrial/commercial sources; 2) substantially reduce noncancer health risks (e.g., birth defects and reproductive effects) associated with air toxics from small industrial/commercial sources; and 3) address disproportionate impacts of air toxics hazards across urban areas, such as those in areas known as "hot spots," and minority and low-income communities in urban areas.

WHY DOES THE STRATEGY FOCUS ON URBAN AREAS?

Air toxics can pose special threats in urban areas because of the large number of people and the variety of toxics sources, such as cars, trucks, large factories, gasoline stations and

dry cleaners. Individually, some of these sources may not emit large amounts of toxic pollutants. However, all of these pollution sources combined can potentially pose significant health threats.

EPA is also concerned about the impact of toxic emissions on minority and low income communities which are often located close to industrial and commercial urbanized areas. EPA intends to collect and evaluate additional information to help identify and prioritize actions to decrease emissions that affect these and other residential communities.

HOW WILL EPA INVOLVE OUTSIDE GROUPS IN IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY?

Over the next few months, EPA plans to work with State and local governments and other stakeholders on developing the national assessments of the risks from air toxics and the materials to communicate the findings with the public.

The Agency will include State, local and Tribal authorities, and in particular mayors, in planning activities under the Strategy to assess and address local air quality concerns. This would include pilot project activities under the Strategy.

EPA will explore the formation of groups such as round tables and panels as a means to involve communities, small businesses and other stakeholders, including representatives from universities and hospitals. These round tables/panels would explore issues related to rulemaking coordination, risk assessments, and the process of defining roles and responsibilities for Federal and State, local and Tribal agencies in implementing the Strategy.

Many of the activities identified in the Strategy will require public notice and comment, and EPA will provide further opportunities for stakeholder input as they are developed.

WHAT ARE SOME IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE STRATEGY OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

Year	Action
1999	Issue the first Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy Report to Congress
	Complete update of National Toxics Inventory for 1996 air emissions
	Begin State, local and Tribal stakeholder communication and information exchange on implementing the Strategy
	Establish new or expanded monitoring stations in urban areas
	Advance notice of proposed rulemaking to regulate sulfur in diesel fuel (this notice was issued in May 1999 and the timeframe is not yet determined for any proposed and final action)
	Propose regulation addressing toxic emissions from motor vehicles and their fuels (proposal date may be extended until mid-2000)

- Finalize new emissions standards for passenger cars and light-duty trucks (includes limitations on sulfur in gasoline)
- Technology review of highway heavy-duty diesel engines
- Voluntary measures guidance for retrofitting diesel engines
- Roadside smoke testing of highway diesel trucks
- 2000 Complete initial national and urban scale assessment of 1996 air toxics emissions estimates
- Start development of new area source standards identified in Strategy
- Finalize regulations addressing fuel or vehicle emissions (date may be extended until mid-2001)
- Establish new or expanded monitoring stations in 36 areas
- Initiate pilot projects in several cities
- 2001 Technology review of non-road diesel engines
- 2002 Complete update of National Toxics Inventory for 1999 data
- Complete the second Integrated Urban Air Toxics Strategy Report to Congress
- 2003 Complete national and urban scale assessment of 1999 air toxics emissions estimates
- Propose regulations for 13 area source categories listed in the Strategy
- Add to (complete) list of area sources to be regulated under the Strategy
- 2004 Promulgate regulations for 13 area source categories listed in the Strategy

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Anyone with Internet access can obtain the Federal Register notice and the background documentation from EPA's web site on the Internet under "recent actions" at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For additional background information on the Strategy, visit EPA's website: and <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/urban/urbanpg.html>. All of this information is also available through EPA's Air and Radiation Docket Information Center (Docket Number A-97-44) by calling (202) 260-7548 or FAX (202) 260-4000 (a reasonable fee may be charged for copying). For questions about the Strategy, contact Laura McKelvey at (919) 541-5497.

EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air pollution programs including air toxics issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/air>

TABLE 1. List of the 33 Urban Air Toxics

acetaldehyde	ethylene oxide
acrolein	formaldehyde
acrylonitrile	hexachlorobenzene
arsenic compounds	hydrazine
benzene	lead compounds
beryllium compounds	manganese compounds
1,3-butadiene	mercury compounds
cadmium compounds	methylene chloride (dichloromethane)
carbon tetrachloride*	nickel compounds
chloroform	polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
chromium compounds	polycyclic organic matter (POM)
coke oven emissions*	quinoline
dioxin	1, 1, 2, 2-tetrachlorethane
1, 2-dibromoethane*	tetrachloroethylene (perchloroethylene)
propylene dichloride	trichloroethylene
1, 3-dichloropropene	vinyl chloride
ethylene dichloride (1,2-dichloroethane)	--

* Toxic air pollutants with less significant emissions contributions from area sources.

TABLE 2. Area Source Categories Already Subject to Standards or Which Will Be Subject to Standards

Chromic Acid Anodizing	Industrial Boilers
Commercial Sterilization Facilities	Institutional/Commercial Boilers
Other Solid Waste Incinerators (Human/Animal Cremation)	Medical Waste Incinerators
Decorative Chromium Electroplating	Municipal Waste Combustors
Dry Cleaning Facilities	Open Burning of Scrap Tires
Halogenated Solvent Cleaners	Secondary Lead Smelting

Hard Chromium Electroplating	Stationary Internal Combustion Engines
Hazardous Waste Combustors	Portland Cement Manufacturing

TABLE 3. New Area Source Categories Being Listed

Cyclic Crude and Intermediate Production	Municipal Landfills
Flexible Polyurethane Foam Fabrication Operations	Oil and Natural Gas Production
Hospital Sterilizers	Paint Stripping Operations
Industrial Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing	Plastic Materials and Resins Manufacturing
Industrial Organic Chemical Manufacturing	Publicly Owned Treatment Works
Mercury Cell Chlor-Alkali Plants	Synthetic Rubber Manufacturing
Gasoline Distribution (Stage I)	--